The Death Of Christ

Intro: Many in the world today stress the birth of Christ, but the Bible emphasizes His death; Acts 20:7 “And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight”; 1 Cor. 11:26 “For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord’s death till he come.” The cross is the pivotal point in human history, and a study of the events surrounding His death magnify this fact. Today let us notice some of the points about that all significant event.

I. Why Did Jesus Need To Die?
   A. God’s Eternal purpose.
      1. John 6:38 “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.” What was the Father’s will?
      2. It embraced the sacrifice of Jesus as the sin offering for sinful man.
         a. Eph. 3:11 “According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
         b. 1 Pet. 1:17-20 “And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,”
         c. Gen. 3:15 “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”
         d. Gen. 12:1-3 “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” cf. Gal. 3:8, 16 “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.... Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.”
         e. The promise was fulfilled when Christ died and arose from the grace.
         f. This took the sting out of death.
            (1) Heb. 2:14 “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;”
            (2) 1 Cor. 15:55-57 “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
B. For the remission of sins.

1. Heb. 9:22 “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”

2. Zec. 13:1 “In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.”
   a. In Christ death that fountain was opened unto man.
   b. Thus, through His death we have our sins taken away.
      (1) Rev. 1:5 “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,”
      (2) Heb. 9:14 “How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?”
      (3) 1 John 1:7 “But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”
      (4) Mat. 26:28 “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”
      (5) Eph. 1:7 “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;”
      (6) Heb. 9:12 “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”

3. 1 Cor. 5:7 “Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:”

4. John 1:29 “The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

5. We come in contact with that blood of Christ which He shed in His death in baptism.

C. To Reconcile Man to God.

1. When man sinned in the garden of Eden man separated himself from God.
   a. Isa. 59:1-2 “Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: 2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.”
   b. The very nature of God demands this.
      (1) Light—1 John 1:5 “This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.”
      (2) Holy—1 Pet. 1:16 “Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.”
      (3) Righteous—Rom. 1:17 “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

2. It took the death of Christ to bring man back to God.
   a. Eph. 2:16 “And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:”
b.  Isa. 53:5 “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” cf. Rom. 5:10 “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.”

II.  Why Did Jesus Die? (The Forces That Contributed To His Death).
   A.  The Love of God
      1.  John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
      2.  Rom. 5:8 “But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”
   B.  The weakness of man.
      1.  Wilful ignorance.
         a.  Luke 23:34 “Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.”
         b.  Acts 3:17 “And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.”
         c.  1 Cor. 2:8 “Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.”
         d.  Theirs was wilful; Mat. 13:15 “For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.”
      2.  Envy of the Jewish leaders.
         a.  Mat. 27:18 “For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.”
         b.  John 11:48 “If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.”
         c.  John 12:19 “The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.”
      3.  The betrayal by Judas.
         a.  His love of money.
         b.  Mat. 26:15 “And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.”
      4.  The cowardice of Pilate.
         a.  He could find no fault in Christ.
         b.  Popularity meant more than principle.
   C.  The humility of Jesus.
      1.  Phi. 2:8 “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”
      2.  Heb. 12:2 “Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”
      3.  Mat. 26:39 “And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.”
D. Our need for salvation.
1. Rom. 3:10, 23 “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:... 23For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”
2. There was no hope apart from Christ.
   a. Mat. 20:28 “Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”
   b. Heb. 2:9 “But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”
   c. 1 Tim. 1:15 “This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.”

III. HOW DID JESUS DIE?
A. Openly.
1. About two million Jews were in Jerusalem on this occasion.
2. Acts 26:26 “For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner.”

B. Vicariously.
1. It means that He died on behalf of others.
2. 2 Cor. 5:21 “For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”
3. 1 Pet. 2:24 “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed.”
4. 1 Pet. 3:18 “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:”

C. Painfully.
1. Scourging.
   a. With what is known as a “cat of nine tails.”
   b. It was enough to kill many men.
2. A crown of thorns placed on His head.
3. He was made to carry His cross.
4. The cross.
   a. He was laid on it while it was still on the ground.
   b. Spikes were driven into His hands and feet.
   c. It was lifted up and then dropped into a hole.
5. The hymn writer has beautifully portrayed this:
   “See From His head, His hands, His feet,
   Sorrow and love flowed mingled down;
   Did e’er such love and sorrow meet,
   Or thorns compose so rich a crown?”

D. Alone.
1. His apostles had left Him.
2. God had even forsaken Him; Mark 15:34 “And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”
IV. Lessons We Learn From His Death.
   A. Law of Moses was abolished.

1. The New Testament was ushered in by the blood of Christ (His death); Mat. 26:28 “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.”

2. Gal. 2:21 “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

3. In establishing His testament He took away the first (law of Moses).
   a. Heb. 10:9 “Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.”
   b. Heb. 8:7-13 “For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. °For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: °Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. °For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. °And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. °For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. °In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away.” cf. Jer 31:31-34 “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; °Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: °But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. °And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”
   c. Gal. 3:24-25 “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. °But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

4. Rom. 7:1-4, 5-6 “Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? °For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. °So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. °Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. °For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.
But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

a. We are dead to the law.
b. It is that law that said, “Thou shalt not covet.”
c. That law is the Ten Commandments, but includes all the law; cf. Exo. 20:17 “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”

B. His church was established.

1. Mat. 16:18-19 “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”
   a. “The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”
   b. Even though Christ died, that death could not prevent the church from being established.
   c. Christ arose from that grave; cf. Acts 2:27, 31 “Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.... 31 He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.”
   d. Christ empowered the apostles to make it a reality.

2. Acts 2:47, 41 “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.”

C. The hope of our resurrection.

1. 1 Cor. 15:20, 23 “But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.... 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.”
   a. Christ is the firstfruits of those that sleep.
   b. Because Christ arose from the grave.

2. John 11:25 “Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:”

3. John 5:28-29 “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, 29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

4. 1 Cor. 15:55-57 “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 55 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

5. We are to comfort one another with this hope; 1 Thess. 4:13-18 “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. 15 For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with
them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

D. Spiritual beauty and significance of baptism.

1. 1 Cor. 15:1-4 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:”

2. That Gospel must be obeyed.

a. Heb. 5:8-9 “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him;”

b. Rom. 6:17 “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.”

3. We obey it in baptism.

a. Col. 2:12 “Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.”

b. Rom. 6:1-7 “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? 3Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 4Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: 6Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7For he that is dead is freed from sin.”

4. We are thus put into Christ.

a. Gal. 3:27 “For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

b. We thus have all spiritual blessings; Eph. 1:3 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.”

c. We thus have salvation; 2 Tim. 2:10 “Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.”

Conclusion: While the death of Christ was a terrible event in the annals of history, yet it brings a wonderful result to those who obey the commands associated with it.